

FIELD INVESTIGATION NOTES

Livestock - Madison County
Thole Ag, Inc.

CAFO Inspection

Date:

May 8, 2013

Inspected By:

Joseph D. Stitely, BOW/Marion

Accompanied By:

Brian E. Rodely, BOW/Marion

Interviewed:

Daniel Thole, Co-owner

Weather Conditions:

Partly sunny, warm, about 72° F

Location:

SW 1/4 of Section 36; T. 3N.; R. 5W.

Mailing Address:

Daniel Thole
Thole Ag, Inc.
5107 Lee Road
Aviston, Illinois 62216

BACKGROUND

On April 26, 2012, I conducted a CAFO Inspection at Thole Ag, Inc., while accompanied by Brian Rodely (BOW/Marion), to determine if the facility was causing or threatening to cause water pollution.

OBSERVATIONS

Brian Rodely and I arrived at the facility at about 10:00 a.m. at which time we were contacted by Daniel Thole, Co-owner. Brian Rodely and I explained to Mr. Thole that we were conducting unannounced CAFO inspections of livestock facilities and we needed to conduct an inspection of his dairy farm. Initially, we met with the co-owner and completed the Livestock Facility Inspection Checklist. It should be noted that the facility does not currently have a nutrient management plan for the facility. Mr. Thole indicated that Frank & West Environmental Engineers is currently developing one for the facility. Following completion of the checklist, we toured the facility Mr. Thole. It should be noted that Brian Rodely and I both wore disposable sanitary footwear throughout the facility tour. The site plan map and photo pages should be used as a reference for the tour described below.

At the time of the inspection, the facility contained 650 milking dairy cows, 25 dry cows, and 45 calves. Initially, we walked to the facility's waste containment area. The waste containment system consists of a two-stage settling basin which flows by gravity to Holding Pond #1, which is pumped to Holding Pond #2, then flows by gravity to Holding Pond #3. Wastewater from Holding Pond #3 is used as flush water for freestall barns. The three holding ponds have a total capacity of approximately 3.5 million gallons. Each of the holding ponds had sufficient freeboard at the time of the inspection. Holding Pond #3 had approximately three feet of available freeboard.

Walking to the east, I noted that most of the buildings' roofs that were adjacent to the facility's concrete feedlot areas were equipped with guttering to divert stormwater away. No discharges were observed from the various freestall buildings at the facility. On the northern edge of the facility, we observed the silage bag storage area. No leachate was observed exiting the storage area.

On the eastern edge of the facility, we observed the facility's earthen feedlot area that the co-owner refers to as the "dry lot" (see attached photographs). The earthen feedlot is utilized periodically for the facility's dry cows. At the time of the inspection, there were not any livestock contained on the earthen feedlot and no liquid runoff was observed exiting the feedlot area. However, I explained to Mr. Thole that if livestock is to be contained in the area, the facility must either provide liquid manure containment system for all liquid runoff exiting the feedlot or return the feedlot to vegetated permanent pasture.

Finally, we observed the covered lot area and concrete pit of the eastern portion of the facility. I noted that there was a box cut out of the retaining wall southwest of the concrete pit. On the east side of the retaining wall I observed a tile. The tile would allow concrete feedlot runoff and leachate from the silos to exit the area. At the time of the inspection, the tile was closed using a sandbag (see attached photograph). The tile discharged to a ditch on the south edge of the facility. At the time of the inspection, the tile was not discharging. I explained to the co-owner that the tile must either be removed or permanently sealed to eliminate any potential that a discharge could occur from the tile.

CONCLUSIONS

In order to assist the facility in attaining compliance, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Immediately remove or permanently seal the discharge tile inlet located southwest of the facility's concrete pit. At the time of the inspection, a sand bag was placed in the inlet to prevent the discharge of livestock wastes.

2. Collect all liquid runoff from the facility's "dry lot" earthen feedlot area. The liquid runoff should be contained in a manure storage system. This system may consist of a settling pond plus a holding pond, a manure stacking area plus a holding pond, a biological waste storage lagoon, an aboveground manure storage tank (slurry-store), or concrete pit, or
3. Return the unvegetated "dry lot" earthen feedlot to an area of well-established permanent vegetative pasture.
4. Develop and submit a written comprehensive nutrient management plan (CNMP) that outlines appropriate utilization and disposal of the manure. Your CNMP should also include a description of land application areas and methods. Your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) or the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service may provide assistance in developing the management plan.

Joseph D. Stitely, P.E.
Environmental Protection Engineer

JDS:tholeag.002/4-29-03

Original: BOW/DWPC/FOS/Marion
cc: BOW/DWPC/FOS/Collinsville
BOW/DWPC/RU